

**HB 577 (Caferro):**

***Children's Health Care Act***

Hearing by House Human Services (Ron Stoker, Chair)

21 February 2007 Room 152 3:00 PM

**Mister Chairman and Members of the Committee:**

For the record, my name is Judy Reel [SPELL], and I am here today on behalf of the Montana Association of Churches, an ecumenical alliance comprised of ten denominational judicatories and the several hundred mainline Christian churches they represent.

The Montana Association of Churches supports policies and efforts aimed at advancing economic justice in Montana, and we assert our strong belief that a fundamental measure of any economy is how the poor and vulnerable within that society are treated.

We call upon the State Legislature and the people of Montana to recognize the rights of children in our midst by providing the special protections and opportunities they need to develop physically, mentally and socially in a healthy and dignified manner.

Two of MAC's priorities for this legislative session are the *provision of health care and insurance for the poor* and *broadening the safety net for the vulnerable among us*. Because HB 577 clearly falls within both of these defined priorities, the Montana Association of Churches stands in strong support of this bill and urges your favorable consideration of it.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of this important bill.